

COMMUNITY SCHOOL SPONSOR EVALUATION ADVISORY PANEL FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

MISSION

The mission of the advisory panel is to recommend a comprehensive evaluation system for community school sponsors to the superintendent of the Ohio Department of Education to assist in its oversight of sponsors and to improve the quality of sponsor practices.

PANEL OVERVIEW

The Ohio Department of Education wishes to thank the following individuals for engaging in the work of the advisory panel:

- Phillip Dennison, CPA principal, Packer Thomas;
- Mark Hatcher, partner, Baker Hostetler law firm;
- Thomas Hosler, superintendent, Perrysburg Exempted Village Schools.

The advisory panel met seven times in 2015 to review requirements, develop recommendations and consider stakeholder feedback.

Aug. 28
Sept. 17
Oct. 1
Oct. 15
Oct. 27
Nov. 18
Dec. 8

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

- 1) **Governed by Ohio Revised Code Section 3314.016.**
- 2) **Three components – Academic Performance, Compliance with Laws and Rules and Quality Practice.**
- 3) **All weighted equally.**

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) **The sponsor evaluation framework must be transparent.**
 - The framework recommendations should be posted for stakeholder review.
 - Technical documentation of the framework (including details of the formula for calculation) must be posted.
 - All related information (report cards, compliance reports, Quality Review measures, audit findings, related links) should be easily accessible from a central site on the department's website.
- 2) **The process for implementing, calculating and reporting sponsor evaluations must be thoroughly reviewed by the Ohio Department of Education Data Governance Committee. Recognizing the substantive impact of the sponsor evaluations on students' quality school opportunities, the Ohio Department of Education Data Governance Committee will review the implementation life cycle, ensuring the evaluations are designed, carried out and reported with integrity, accuracy and legal fidelity.**

- The department's data governance process will ensure that the sponsor evaluation process will include extensive quality assurance on data, senior leadership (including legal staff) approval of protocols and reporting, and cross-agency engagement in implementation and ongoing evaluations.

3) Public reporting mechanisms must be strengthened.

- Completed Quality Practice reports should be presented directly to the sponsor's governing board.
- The department of education should develop minimum common elements for the sponsor's annual community school reports for comparison purposes. Reports can provide additional information beyond the minimum common elements.
- Sponsors' annual community school reports should be easily accessible from the central website.

4) The system should be focused on continuous improvement with appropriate resources linked to ratings so sponsors and schools have access to aligned technical assistance and professional development.

5) To the extent legally permissible, the department should be referenced as an intended third party beneficiary under the contract between the sponsor and the community school.

- The basis for this recommendation is to ensure that sponsors are appropriately monitoring schools and the department can intervene if the sponsor fails to take appropriate action (for example, continuing to operate a school that does not meet the minimum opening requirements). This recommendation does not include the department becoming a party to the contract between the sponsor and the school.

6) To the extent possible, resources should be allocated to support the department in conducting this evaluation process on an ongoing basis.

- The department's internal organizational structure should reflect a separation of its duties regarding sponsorship and evaluation.

7) The recommendations outlined by the panel are suggested for the 2015-2016 sponsor evaluations.

- The 2015-2016 sponsor evaluations must be posted between Oct. 1-15, 2016.
- These evaluations will include academic data from the 2015-2016 school year, compliance data based on the updated administrative rules and quality practice data based on the updated scoring structure.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE COMPONENT

8) The Academic Performance component must align to the Ohio School Report Cards so there is a coherent state accountability evaluation of academic performance.

- It should include *all* applicable report card measures. For example, if a community school is an elementary school, it would not have a graduation rate.
- It should be weighted by the number of students enrolled in each school.

9) The Academic Performance component must meet statutory requirements in Ohio law (Ohio Revised Code 3314.016) in terms of which schools are included/excluded¹.

- Schools that are excluded:
 - Community schools that have been in operation for not more than two full school years; and
 - Special needs community schools described in law (Ohio Revised Code 3314.35(A)(4)(b)).
- Schools to be included:
 - All other community schools, including eSchools; and
 - Dropout Recovery Community Schools.

¹ This would also include year-to-year changes in the sponsor's academic performance.

10) For consistency with traditional schools, the panel recommends that the General Assembly revise language on the Academic Performance component regarding the basis of the performance measures so that academic performance of sponsors is measured the same as the academic performance of school districts.

- The panel recognizes that sponsors do not operate in an identical manner to districts. However, the statute governing the Academic Performance component expressly references accountability for academic performance of students and these measures should be comparable since sponsors, through contractual arrangements, have the ability to address performance issues, including school academic performance.
- Safe harbor does not apply to this since the department is not assigning an overall letter grade to the building and is using the data for purposes of assigning a numerical value to calculate this component.

11) The panel recognizes the high quality of the department’s verification process for report card data, which includes extensive quality assurance, district review, formal appeals and agency leadership approval.

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND RULES COMPONENT

12) Compliance reviews must be based on the respective sponsor’s certification of ALL relevant laws and rules.

13) Consistent with House Bill 2, the department must conduct a comprehensive review of the list of all applicable laws and rules and update as necessary.

- This may include specialized lists for different types of entities. For example, not all laws are applicable to eSchools.
- The department will provide the list(s), and it should be updated annually.

14) The department should strengthen data protocols for verification of sponsor evidence of compliance.

- Verification should be based on a judgmental (i.e. not predetermined), which includes, but is not limited to, critical items (not pre-identified) selection of laws and rules.
- If a certain percentage of the certified items cannot be verified, the sponsor should be scored at the lowest level for this component.
- The department may identify certain core compliance items that if not met would result in a sponsor receiving a reduction in the compliance rating (to be determined in administrative rule).

15) The scoring structure for the Compliance component shall be updated to reflect the recommendations referenced in #12-14 above.

- This will require an administrative rule amendment.
- Rule amendment should include updated protocols on the number of schools to be reviewed by a sponsor to allow for random selection of schools.
- Seek legislative change to permit sponsors with one school who receive “exemplary” ratings to carryover ratings for extended periods (such as two to three years) and avoid need for repetitive annual reviews.

16) The department should explore opportunities for additional enhancements and efficiencies such as:

- Coordination with the state auditor’s annual audits.
- Third-party (contracted) review and verifications.

17) The panel recommends that the department focus on the importance of compliance regarding submission of data to the department from the sponsor and its schools including, but not limited to, enrollment data, which is used for funding purposes. The department should validate and verify data using internal data sources and publicly available data sources from other state agencies.

QUALITY PRACTICE COMPONENT

- 18) The implementation of the Quality Practice rubric is time and resource intensive. The department should consider options for the 2016-2017 sponsor evaluations addressing these needs such as:
- Allowing sponsors that receive the highest rating on the Quality Practice component to carry over that rating and be evaluated on a rotating basis instead of an annual schedule.
 - Utilizing permitted third-party contractors to complete the Quality Practice reviews. This would require:
 - Consistent protocols; and
 - Studies to ensure fidelity of the process.
 - The state should consider providing additional resources to address the department’s capacity to do annual Quality Practice reviews.
 - The current Quality Practice review consists of 42 individual standards. The department should examine future data from Quality Practice results to determine if the number of standards in the review could be reduced and still produce reliable results. For example, standard statistical analysis (such as “factor analysis”) should be conducted once full data are available to determine if multiple items used in the review produce redundant information.
- 19) The student performance items in the performance contracting section of the Quality Practice rubric must be updated to align with the Academic Performance component requirements.

SUMMATIVE FORMULA FOR OVERALL RATING

- 20) Create a fair, transparent and not overly complex calculation for the summative ratings.

The summative rating scoring structure is determined by the following framework:

- Pursuant to Ohio law (Ohio Revised Code, section 3314.016(B)(6)), all three components will be weighted equally.
- All three components will be scored on a common scale (0-4 points) to allow for simple calculations. Each sponsor will receive points for each component that, when added together, provide a summative rating. The scoring table is as follows:

Academic Performance				Compliance			Quality Practice		
Report Card Grade (or Equivalent)	Dropout Recovery Report Card Rating	Points		Compliance	Points		Quality Rating	Points	
A	Exceeds	4		Full Compliance	4		Exceeds Standards	4	
B		3		Satisfactory Compliance	3		Meets Standards	3	
C	Meets	2	+	Partial Compliance	2	+	Progressing Toward Standards	2	=
D		1		Needs Significant Improvement	1		Below Standards	1	
F	Does Not Meet	0		Non-Compliance	0		Significantly Below Standards	0	

Overall Points	Sponsor Rating
10,11,12	Exemplary
7,8,9	Effective
3,4,5,6	Ineffective
0,1,2	Poor

- Each of the three components will be given a separate rating based on the common numerical scale.
- Additional business rules should be included to address sponsors with the lowest performance ratings in one or more components.
 - Rule 1 – A sponsor can score no better than “Ineffective” if it receives 0 points in any component.
 - Rule 2 – If a sponsor scores 0 in any two components, then the Overall rating is “Poor.”
- The Academic Performance grade will be based on the Ohio School Report Cards and utilize the report card methodology for determining an overall letter grade on the Ohio School Report Cards.

Report Card Grade (or Equivalent)*	Dropout Recovery Report Card Rating	Points Earned for Academic Component
A	Exceeds	4
B		3
C	Meets	2
D		1
F	Does Not Meet	0

*As required by Ohio law, the department will not issue overall grades until the 2017-2018 report card, so the equivalent score will be used based on the formula for component and overall letter grades.

- The original statutory language references the academic performance of students and HB 2 then added additional language regarding this component being derived from the report card.
 - A hybrid approach could be utilized to aggregate report card data for the schools in the portfolio. Individual school-level report card data is translated to the common scale for each school in the portfolio and then weighted by the total percentage of the average daily membership of the entire statewide portfolio
- HB 2 also specifies that “the academic performance component shall also include year-to-year changes in the overall sponsor portfolio.”
 - Therefore, each sponsor’s rating will include relevant data from the schools in the sponsor’s portfolio at the time of the evaluation. For example, if a sponsor or school does not renew its contract, that school’s data would not be included in the evaluation. That school’s data would be included in the new sponsor’s evaluation.
- HB 2 includes the provision “for a community school for which no graded performance measures are applicable or available, the department shall use non-report card performance measures specified in the contract between the community school and the sponsor under division (A)(4) of section 3314.03 of the Revised Code.”
 - This provision may apply in very limited cases as nearly every school has at least one report card measure.
 - In the event that this applies, the department will develop a rubric to evaluate the non-report card measures in the contract that will translate into the common scale in the framework.
- The compliance rule will need to be updated to align with HB 2, which specifies certification of all relevant laws and rules, as well as updating the scoring structure to reflect the common scoring scale.

- The score will be based on the percentage of total items in compliance.
- The rule may allow for some core items to be weighted more heavily in the scoring.

Compliance Rating	Percent of Items in Compliance	Points Earned for Compliance Component
Full Compliance	95 - 100%	4
Satisfactory Compliance	90% - 94.9%	3
Partial Compliance	80% - 89.9%	2
Needs Significant Improvement	70% - 79.9%	1
Non-Compliance	Less than 70% (or not meeting Data Verification requirements)	0

- During the data verification process for the Compliance component, compliance percentages may be adjusted.
 - If items were reported in compliance but cannot be verified, the percentage will be adjusted accordingly.
 - If a specified portion (to be identified in Administrative Rule) of tested items cannot be verified, the sponsor will automatically receive the lowest rating – “Non-Compliance.”
 - The department should identify certain core compliance items that, if not met, would result in a sponsor receiving a reduction in the Compliance rating (to be determined in rule).
- Based on the panel’s recommendations, the Quality Practice component summative scoring scale will be updated to reflect the common scoring scale.
 - The new Quality Rating component scale is based on the percentage of the points in the Quality Review measures.

Quality Rating	Percentage of Points in the Quality Review	Points Earned for Quality Component
Exceeds Standards	90 – 100%	4
Meets Standards	75 – 89.9%	3
Progressing Toward Standards	70 – 74.9%	2
Below Standards	55 – 69.9%	1
Significantly Below Standards	0 – 54.9%	0

- An comprehensive example for a hypothetical sponsor with three community schools:

School	Report Card Grade	Points	ADM	Weight	Weighted points
Community School 1	A	4	250	X 250/1000	1
Community School 2	D	1	500	X 500/1000	.5
Dropout Recovery School 1	C	2	250	X 250/1000	.5
Rating earned for Academic Performance component					2.0 = "C"
Points earned for the Academic Performance component					2
Rating earned for Compliance component					Fully Compliant
Points earned for the Compliance component					4
Rating earned for Quality Practice component					Progressing Toward Standards
Points earned for the Quality Practice component					2
Summative Overall Rating for Sponsor					2 + 4 + 2 = 8 Effective

21) Expectations for sponsor performance should increase as best practices are implemented and this evaluation framework becomes fully embedded. Accordingly, the summative scoring scale should be adjusted starting with the 2017-2018 school year.

Overall Points	Sponsor Rating	Overall Points (2017-18)
10,11,12	Exemplary	11,12
7,8,9	Effective	8,9,10
3,4,5,6	Ineffective	4,5,6,7
0,1,2	Poor	0,1,2,3

22) This scoring framework has been developed prior to producing full sets of data for each component. Accordingly, the formula, including rating thresholds, should be reviewed after full implementation in 2015-2016 and regularly thereafter. This may include, but should not be limited to:

- Calibrating component and summative rating thresholds;
- Factor analysis of Quality Practice rubric items;
- Update evaluation based on future legislative changes, including compliance.